

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 0558

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SP, ECON, EFIN

SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHY OF FINANCE MINISTER VILLAR MIR

FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

REF:MADRID 0536

FOLLOWING IS THE BIOGRAPHY ON FINANCE MINISTER JUAN MIGUEL
VILLAR MIR:

1. VILLAR MIR IS A LAWYER, CIVIL ENGINEER AND BUSINESS EXECUTIVE,
IN GOVT SERVICE OFF AND ON SINCE 1958 IN VARIOUS HIGH RANKING
ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS IN PUBLIC WORKS. HE HAD BEEN PRESIDENT
OF ALTOS HORNOS (STEEL) BEFORE HIS APPOINTMENT. POLITICALLY
DESCRIBED AS AN "OPUS DEI" TECHNOCRAT, HE ENJOY A HIGH
REPUTATION IN THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY FOR HIS ADMINISTRATIVE
ABILITY AND AS A HARD WORKER. HE HAS HAD NO
DIRECT CONNECTION WITH ANY POLITICAL GROUP. HIS PUBLIC
STATEMENTS INDICATE THAT HIS MAIN PRIORITIES ARE ECONOMIC,
THAT HIS POLITICAL VIEWS HAVE BEEN DERIVED FROM ECONOMIC PERCEPTIONS.
HE ADVOCATED A GOVT WHICH RESPECTS LIBERTY DEFINED IN THE
ECONOMIC SENSE OF PRIVATE INITIATIVE AND A MARKET ECONOMY
BASED ON PRIVATE PROPERTY.

2. ONCE IN THE FINANCE MINISTRY, VILLAR MIR AUTHORED A STATE OF
THE ECONOMY MESSAGE WHICH WAS REMARKABLE FOR ITS CANDOR,
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BUT WHICH ERRED POLITICALLY IN ASCRIBING TO WAGES

THE PRIME RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INFLATIONARY CYCLE. THIS
EXACERBATED THE RECENT WAVE OF LABOR TROUBLES THAT GAVE THE GOS ITS
FIRST SERIOUS TEST. NOW, HOWEVER, HE IS AT WORK ON THE
ECONOMIC PORTION OF ARIAS' JANUARY 28 MESSAGE. THIS IS TO BE
AIMED, WE UNDERSTAND, AT BOLSTERING THE MIDDLE CLASS SECTORS,
THE KEY TO A PEACEFUL EVOLUTION TOWARD MORE DEMOCRATIC
STRUCTURES.
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